

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

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**INDY PARKS SELECTED FINALIST IN
NATIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARDS*****City's parks department recognized for outstanding recreation management and services***

INDIANAPOLIS — The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) have selected Indy Parks and Recreation as a national finalist for the 2006 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This is the second consecutive year the City's parks department received this honor.

The Gold Medal Award honors municipal park and recreation agencies throughout the United States that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development, and agency recognition. Each agency is judged on its ability to address the needs of those it serves through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials.

"To receive this national recognition and acclaim is a great tribute to Joe Wynns and his staff for their hard work and dedication toward creating a well-rounded, world class parks system for Indianapolis residents to enjoy," said Mayor Bart Peterson. "It's also a huge feather in the cap of our community and its ability to attract new business, provide a higher standard of living, and remain competitive with cities nationwide."

Indy Parks is one of four finalists in Class I (population 250,000+). The other Class I finalists include the City of Long Beach (CA) Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine (CA), Fort Worth (TX) Parks and Community Services, and Gwinnett County (Atlanta, GA).

"Indy Parks is honored to be a Gold Medal Award Finalist and to be viewed nationally as leaders in park planning, programming and stewardship practices," said Indy Parks and Recreation Director Joseph Wynns. "This sets the bar for even higher for staff to continue to plan for future recreational needs and to produce quality programs and services for Indianapolis residents of all ages and abilities."

The 2006 Gold Medal Award winning park agency will be announced during the NRPA Annual Congress & Exposition in Seattle, Washington, October 10-14, 2006.

Indy Parks is the host agency for the 2007 NRPA Congress, which will bring more than 10,000 parks and recreation professionals and vendors to Indianapolis in September of 2007.

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About The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA)

The AAPRA is a non-profit organization founded to advance the knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers, and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration.

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